UNITED
NATIONS

E

Economic and Social
Council

PROVISIONAL

E/1995/SR.6
27 February 1995

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Organizational session for 1995

PROVISIONAL SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 6th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 10 February 1995, at 5 p.m.

President: Mr. PAPADATOS (Greece)
(Vice-President)

CONTENTS

JOINT AND CO-SPONSORED PROGRAMME ON HIV/AIDS

BASIC PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE COUNCIL (continued)

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS (continued)

Corrections to this record should be submitted in one of the working languages. They should be set forth in a memorandum and also incorporated in a copy of the record. They should be sent within one week of the date of this document to the Chief, Official Records Editing Section, Office of Conference and Support Services, room DC2-794, 2 United Nations Plaza.

95-80303 (E)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Papadatos (Greece), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 5.35 p.m.

JOINT AND CO-SPONSORED PROGRAMME ON HIV/AIDS

Mr. PIOT (Director, Joint and Co-sponsored Programme on HIV/AIDS), introducing the report of the Committee of Co-sponsoring Organizations to the Economic and Social Council, said that as recommended in Economic and Social Council resolution 1994/24 of 26 July 1994 the Committee of Co-sponsoring Organizations had been established in September 1994. It constituted a single global response to AIDS from the United Nations system, and represented a commitment by the six co-sponsoring agencies, WHO, UNICEF, UNESCO, UNDP, UNFPA and the World Bank, to support AIDS-specific activities on a local and global level, and to include AIDS-related activities on their own normal agendas. In each country, the joint programme would support countries' responses to AIDS through an inter-agency AIDS coordination group known as a Theme Group. All United Nations system funding would be coordinated by those Theme Groups. Funding for country activities would primarily go through existing mechanisms. At global level, there would be a unified budget, and fund-raising would be jointly arranged by the different agencies. Since his appointment in December 1994 the programme had been developing a strategic plan, which would lead to a programme of work and define the objectives of the Programme, and should also result in a budget based on the strategic plan. Mechanisms were being developed for working at country level and for country coordination, and negotiations were taking place on the administrative and legal arrangements to be made among the six agencies. The programme should be fully operational by January 1996, but intended to make an immediate start on AIDS-related activities.

Mr. BUTLER (Australia) recalled the provisions of paragraph 11 of Council resolution 1994/24, requesting informal consultations to decide the composition of the Programme Coordinating Board and review the detailed programme proposal. Good progress had been made so far: the Director of the

Programme had been appointed, and the Council had the draft of the Committee's first report before it. With reference to the contents of that report, it had been agreed that the substance of the joint programme, as set out in sections III and IV, was appropriate. Part V required further development, especially regarding the Legal Instrument. There had been general agreement that section VI needed to be revised, and the consultative group had drawn up a new text, which was the product of consultations and was a recommendation only. Comment on sections VII and VIII had been broadly supportive of their contents, but they required amplification. With reference to the Programme Coordinating Board, consultations had been proceeding and a substantive document should soon be available. He was confident that an agreed recommendation on the constitution of the Board would be produced in time for the Council to take a decision by April 1995 at the latest.

Mr. AGONA (Uganda), referring to section I of the report, said there was a need to emphasize the lack of drugs and facilities and the unavailability of condoms in many developing countries. More stress could be placed on the incidence of the disease, since some sources predicted that in 17 developing countries, AIDS would reduce population growth rates so dramatically that by the year 2010, those countries would have 121 million fewer inhabitants than previously estimated. In Africa, Uganda was worst affected, with life expectancy, currently standing at 47 years, expected to fall to about 42.9 by the year 2005. Such trends had serious implications for productivity, and would compound poverty, further encouraging the spread of HIV/AIDS and other diseases. Poverty was a major factor in the spread of AIDS, and an effective AIDS programme should address that question.

The global nature of the problem required cooperation by the international community. The Joint and Co-sponsored Programme should not be merely an exercise in coordination, but an effective approach to the fight against HIV/AIDS, which would receive both the political and financial support of the international community. Funding commensurate with the magnitude of the problem was essential if the spread of HIV/AIDS were not to continue unabated.

Clear targets for the actions of the Joint Programme must be defined; appropriate strategies for use at country level should be promoted and supported; the special needs of the countries most affected, which were often very poor, should be considered, and there was a need for impact assessment.

The Programme should be the primary source of policy and strategic guidance on HIV/AIDS within the United Nations system. The global nature of the problem should be highlighted. At country level, strengthening the national response to HIV/AIDS would require support. He welcomed the proposed series of consultations and field visits to further develop the Programme's operational strategies. The participation in the Theme Group of representatives of Governments was crucial.

With reference to section VI, he suggested that a standing committee of the Programme Coordinating Board could be established, composed of the Committee of Co-sponsoring Organizations, the Chairman and two other members of the Programme Coordinating Board.

Referring to section VII, he said that without resources there could be no meaningful programme. He therefore hoped that the global appeal to be launched by the programme would receive committed and adequate support from the international community, Governments, organizations and the private sector. A discernible impact needed to be made on the problem, in order to bring hope to those countries most affected and promise a foreseeable end to the pandemic.

The proposed budget for 1996-1997 should be treated as strictly provisional, as it was currently impossible to estimate programme requirements accurately. The Director's proposal would need to be reviewed once the programme became operational. Contributions from the co-sponsors should be predictable, and the programme should be forward-looking. The donor community and all who were in a position to contribute financially, materially or otherwise to the fight against HIV/AIDS should consider what was at stake, which in some cases was the survival of entire communities. Experience showed that no disease could ever be regarded with complacency, and that effective intervention against HIV/AIDS could have a decisive effect, possibly leading to its eradication.

Mr. GLASGOW (Canada) said that good progress had been made in developing the Joint and Co-sponsored Programme since the adoption of Council resolution 1994/24. He reiterated his support for the report of the Committee of Co-sponsoring Organizations, subject to the revisions to section VI on Governments and Management, which were being made to reflect the distinct reporting relationship between the Director and the Programme Coordinating Board as described in the annex to resolution 1994/24, and to clarify the respective

roles of the Programme Coordinating Board and the Committee of Co-sponsoring Organizations. Those fundamental aspects of governance should be fully understood by all interested parties.

The Council's help was needed in order for the programme to become operational. That would involve endorsement of both the details of the programme and the elements of the Programme Coordinating Board. It was therefore to be hoped that the open-ended working group would soon reconvene to complete its work on defining the elements of the Programme's governing body. Once those details had been completed, it would be possible to endorse the entire Programme. Thereafter, the Programme would have its own governing body.

He encouraged the co-sponsors to work closely with Mr. Piot to identify as quickly as possible the resources they would contribute to the programme, and the mechanisms to be used for implementation. The AIDS pandemic continued unabated, and it was essential to ensure that the new joint and co-sponsored programme became operational as soon as possible.

Mr. CONTINI (France), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that the report of the Committee of Co-sponsoring Organizations, and in particular section VI on governance and management, would provide a good basis for discussion. The European Union reserved the right to come back to section VI with a few constructive amendments that would define the relations among the various participants in the Joint and Co-sponsored Programme. All co-sponsoring agencies should support the actions of the Director by all possible means. The European Union would participate constructively in the consultations on the composition of the Programme Coordinating Board.

Mr. AVALLE (Observer for Argentina) said that the Joint and Co-sponsored Programme should serve as an instrument to modify a critical situation that continued to worsen. His delegation therefore appealed to all Member States to support that initiative.

Mr. BIBERO (Venezuela) said that due consideration should be given to the socio-cultural realities of the countries in which the programme was carried out. In that regard, particular attention should be paid to the field of reproductive health and education.

Ms. WILLIAMS-MANIGAULT (United States of America) said that her delegation joined the representative of Argentina in urging all delegations to work hard to support the Programme.

The PRESIDENT said that, in the light of the statements just made, he took it that the Council wished to request the Permanent Representative of Australia to continue his consultations and make appropriate recommendations to the Council as called for in Council resolution 1994/24.

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 3: BASIC PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE COUNCIL (continued) (E/1995/L.5)

The PRESIDENT invited the Council to continue its consideration of the draft resolution contained in document E/1995/L.5, entitled "International cooperation against the illicit production, sale, demand, traffic and distribution of narcotics and psychotropic substances and related activities". According to the consensus reached in informal consultations, the fourth and sixth preambular paragraphs of the draft resolution had been deleted and paragraph 1 had been amended to read:

> "1. Strongly recommends that the organizational session in 1996 adopts the issue of international cooperation against the illicit production, sale, demand, traffic and distribution of narcotics and psychotropic substances and related activities as a theme for the high-level segment of its substantive session of 1996."

Mr. MABILANGAN (Philippines) said that the Group of 77 and China had accepted the amendments to the draft resolution in a spirit of cooperation and on condition that no further changes would be made.

Draft resolution E/1995/L.5, as amended, was adopted.

Mr. BIBERO (Venezuela) said that his delegation had supported the draft resolution because it was convinced that, in order to be productive and efficient, the Council must adopt its decisions unanimously. The priorities contained in General Assembly resolutions 48/12 of 28 October 1993 and 49/168 of 23 December 1994 and in the resolution just adopted should be duly considered by the Council in 1996.

Mr. TERRAZAS (Mexico) said that his delegation was concerned that the Council had not been able to comply fully with General Assembly resolutions 48/12 and 49/168, which had recommended that the issue of international cooperation in the field of narcotic drugs should be considered during the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council in 1995. The resolution just adopted would enable the Council at its high-level segment in 1996 to agree on measures in keeping with the provisions of General Assembly resolution

49/168. There should in future be greater consistency among the issues that delegations promoted in the Assembly and the ones promoted in the Council.

Mr. CONTINI (France), speaking on behalf of the European Union, welcomed the adoption of the draft resolution and thanked the Latin American countries for having helped reach a compromise.

Ms. WILLIAMS-MANIGAULT (United States of America) said that her delegation supported the comments made by the representative of Mexico. At its organizational session, the Council should pay closer attention to what it had been instructed to do at other sessions. While it did not encourage the Council to decide so far in advance on the agenda of its high-level segment of 1996, her delegation considered that that had been the only way to resolve a number of issues to which the Council had not given adequate consideration when they were on its agenda.

Mr. MONGBE (Observer for Benin) said that, while his delegation welcomed the adoption of the compromise text, the Council should be more consistent in complying with decisions that had been taken previously by the Council and the General Assembly.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS (continued) (E/1995/INF.2)

The PRESIDENT invited the Council to continue considering changes to the dates of the meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group on the review of arrangements for consultations with non-governmental organizations and drew the Council's attention to document E/1995/INF.2 containing the calendar of conferences.

After a discussion in which Mr. BUNCH (Chief, Programme and Documentation Planning Section), Mr. CONTINI (France), Ms. FENG (China), Mr. STOBY (Director of the Division for Policy Coordination and Economic and Social Council Affairs), Mr. RAMOUL (Algeria), Mr. MONGBE (Observer for Benin), Ms. IRISH (Canada), Ms. CASTRO de BARISH (Costa Rica), Ms. LIMJUCO (Philippines), Ms. WILLIAMS-MANIGAULT (United States of America) and Mr. RAZA (Pakistan) took part, the PRESIDENT suggested a suspension to enable delegations to reach consensus on the issue.

The meeting was suspended at 7.15 p.m. and resumed at 7.20 p.m.

The PRESIDENT proposed that the meeting of the Working Group should be postponed and non-governmental organizations notified of the postponement, that

the eight-week rule should be waived and that the meeting should be scheduled to take place in May or June. The Bureau would determine and announce the date of the meeting following consultations with the Secretariat.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 7.30 p.m.